



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Laurie Feinberg,
Acting Director

November 13, 2018

REQUEST: Construct Third Floor and Rear Addition (Concept Review)

ADDRESS: 1742-1746 Fleet Street (Fells Point Historic District)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Caitlin Audette

APPLICANT: Brandon Chasen, Owner

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

Fells Point Historic District: The site is located in the Fells Point Historic District. Fells Point is significant as one of the original three settlements that merged to create the earliest form of Baltimore City. The area is directly linked to early maritime trade, an essential force in Baltimore's growth and development. In addition to the significance of Fells Point in the eighteenth century, the community has continued to play an important role in Baltimore history as a constantly growing and changing urban place. Many of the earliest extant buildings were expanded in the Victorian era creating a unique blend of pre-Revolutionary War and post-Civil War architectural styles and characteristics. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Fells Point has been a diverse neighborhood composed of many ethnic groups each influencing the growth and development of the area.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: The property is composed of three buildings 1742-1746 Fleet Street that are being consolidated under the address of 1742 Fleet Street. 1742 and 1744 Fleet Street, the two western most properties, are two-story two-bay brick buildings. Both buildings have been heavily modified with modern brick and a single simple steel door at each property. The historic second floor window openings at each property have been infilled with brick and the cornice at 1742 Fleet Street has been replaced with a modern brick cornice. The historic wood cornice remains at 1744 Fleet. 1746 Fleet Street is a three-story, three-bay brick building. The third floor is a contemporary alteration, dating to the second half of the 20th century. The window and door openings have been heavily modified with the use of glass block and brick infill. No historic cornice is present.

BACKGROUND

- No ATPs have been issued for the property.
- The applicant met with CHAP staff to review the proposal. Based on staff recommendation they modified their proposal from a set-back third floor addition and further set back fourth floor addition to the iteration currently being considered.

PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

The owner intends to consolidate the three properties, construct a third floor to the existing two-story buildings and construct a rear addition, creating 14 apartments. Along with these modifications, the applicant proposes to modify the inappropriate alterations to the historic façade of all three buildings to be more sympathetic to the historic design. A new roof deck is proposed at the new rear addition.

ANALYSIS

Staff applied the following Design Guidelines:

1.18 – Alterations and Additions states the following, “Design alterations and additions to be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the historic building.” and “Design additions to be compatible with the existing historic structure in massing, height, form and scale.” The proposed addition will modify the existing two-story buildings into three-story buildings. The addition of a full third story to a two-story rowhouse is not something that will always meet the CHAP Design Guidelines as listed here, as it can have a dramatic impact on the streetscape (for example, where the row or neighborhood is all or mostly two stories). However, in Fells Point, where the building heights vary on each block and where a third story has already been added to one building in the group (1746 Fleet), this approach is in keeping with the design guidelines. Furthermore, this type of alteration is in keeping with the evolution of the block, which in 1890 had only three three-story buildings and today has six three-story buildings.

This guideline also states, “Retain historic character defining features when planning alterations and additions to the historic building.” The unique context of these properties, including the heavily altered façade at the first floor, bricking up of windows at the second floor, and likely loss of cornice at westernmost building limit the number of historic features to retain. This limited historic fabric lends itself to a new vertical addition.

1.8.10 - Roof Decks states “New roof decks must not be visible from the street-front grade along any primary elevation. Locate roof decks at the rear of a building whenever possible to minimize visibility.” The proposal is a new shared roof deck for all the tenants of the building. The deck will be located to the rear of the addition and will not be visible from Fleet Street. The proposed roof deck will have minimal visibility from Ann Street.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Fells Point DRC has reviewed the application and the three-person panel unanimously voted to issue conceptual approval for the previous iteration of the proposal (set back third floor addition, and further set back fourth floor addition.) Additionally, the DRC made a number of further recommendations. The full response is outlined below.

There is consensus with the FDRC to recommend approval for CONCEPT DESIGN approval only and that will only hold true for the former iteration with the rear additions not seen from Fleet St. as opposed to the additions that would front Fleet St. a top of the existing 2 story structures. The FDRC does recommend a follow up CHAP

Commission hearing for Architectural Detailing since there are still a number of issues to resolve. Below are those items to address prior to official CHAP Approval:

- Applicant must show updated drawings for the storefront design for both of the 2 story existing structures.*
- Applicant must show updated detail for the cornice above the most left property once the non historic brick is removed.*
- Applicant must provide final specs on all windows, doors, and lighting fixtures as well as any other surface mounted items on the existing historic facades.*
- Applicant must provide final paint colors throughout and insure that it is from an approved historic paint line or showing historical evidence to match those colors.*
- If applicant is going to incorporate signage, those details and specifications must be presented to the FDRC prior to final CHAP approval.*
- If applicant is going to provide a new guardrail at the existing stair or if a ramp and railing is needed for ADA access to the most left ADA unit, then those details and specifications must be presented to the FDRC prior to final CHAP approval.*

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposal with the final proposal to return to the full commission for review with the following condition;

- Details should be provided to show what historic material is in place beyond the non-original brick façade at the first floor and the non-original cornice at 1742 Fleet Street. If any historic materials are extant, they should be evaluated with CHAP staff for potential reuse.



**Eric Holcomb,
Director**

MAP AND IMAGES

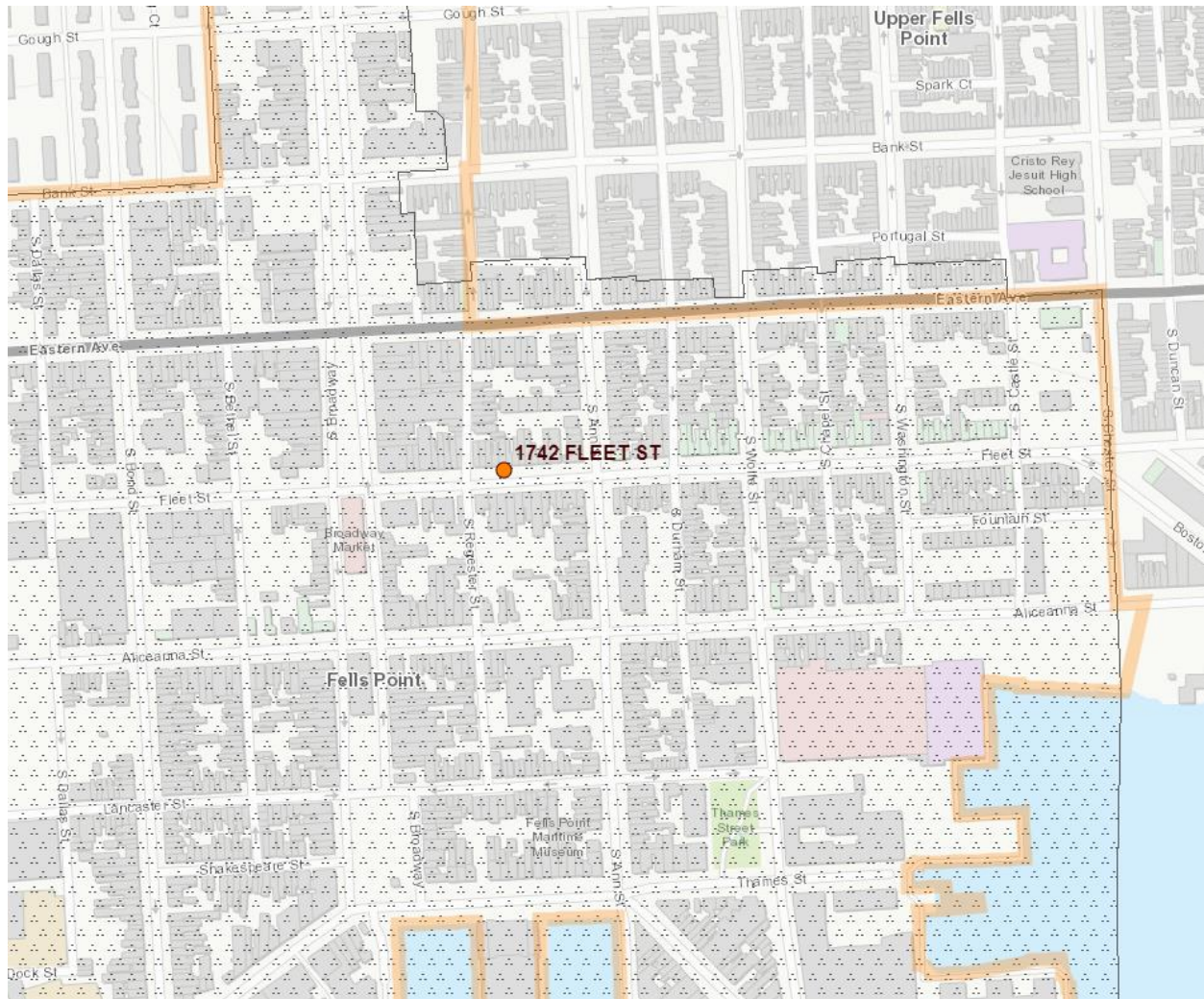


Image 1– Location of 1742 Fleet Street within the Fells Point Historic District



Image 2– Aerial view of buildings looking north



Image 3– Aerial view of rear of buildings looking south

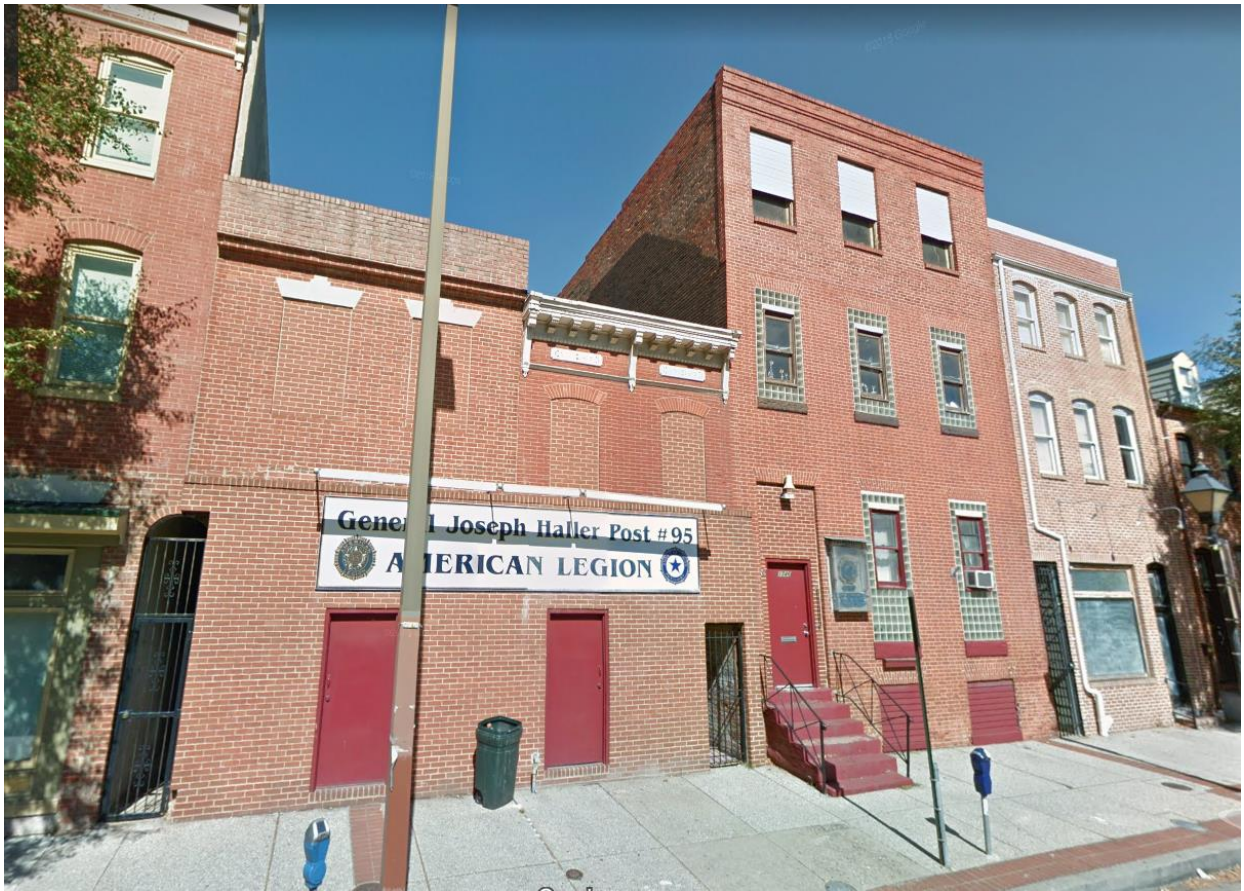


Image 4– Image of front elevation looking northeast from Fleet Street

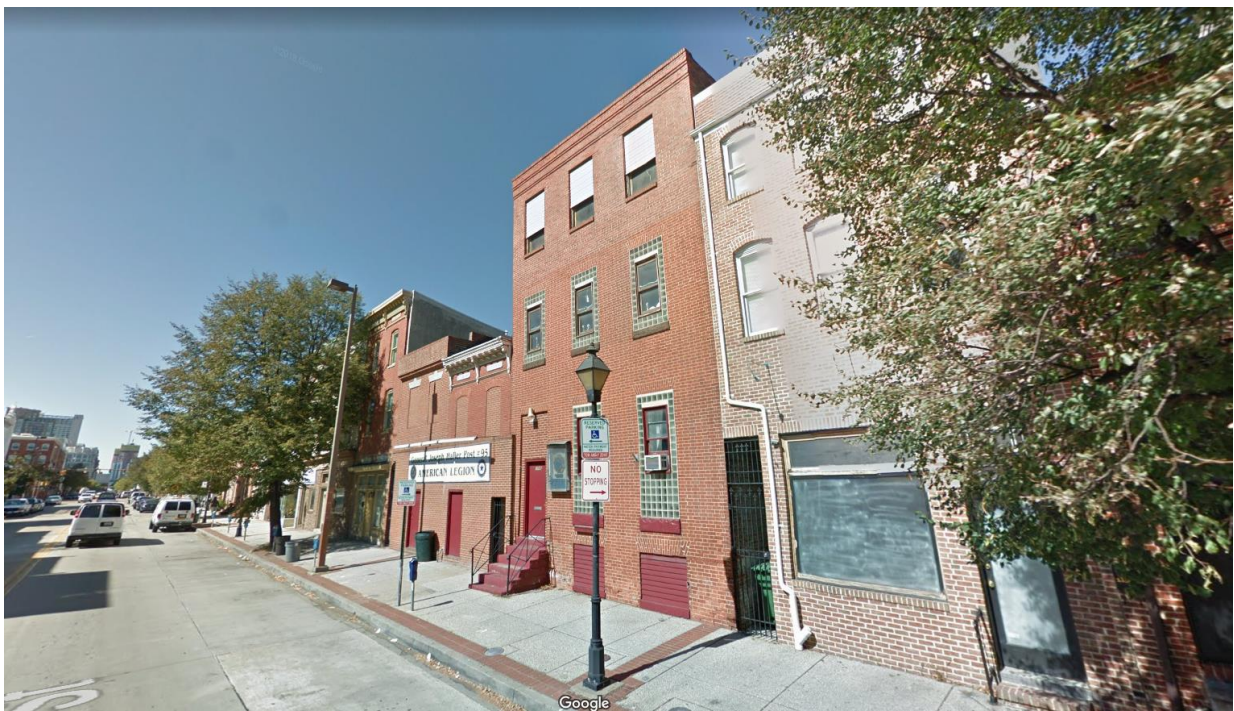


Image 5– Image of front elevation looking northwest from Fleet Street

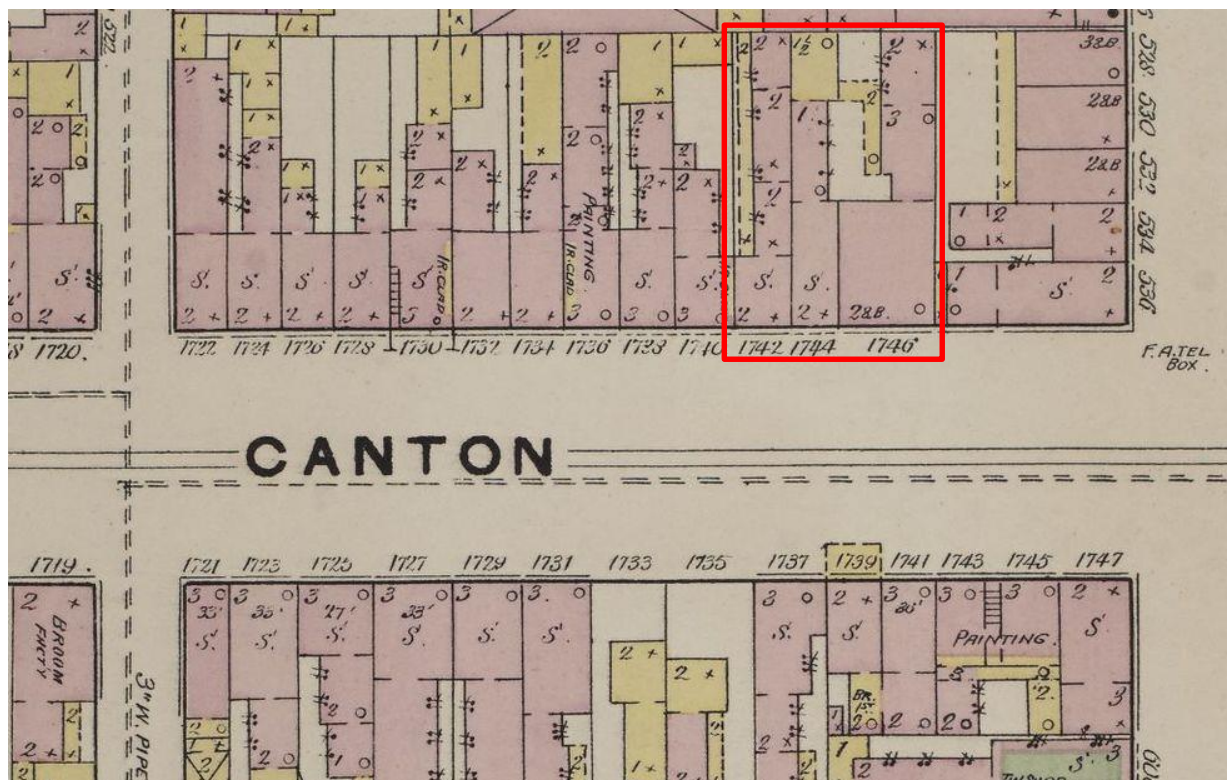


Image 6– Image from 1890 Sanborn Map showing that the three buildings in question where all two-stories. (Canton is the historic name for Fleet Street)